Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-17. (canceled)

Claim 18. (currently amended) A process for preparing a pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt in non-crystalline form, which comprises:

[[a')]](a) providing a solution of atorvastatin lactone in a non-hydroxylic solvent;

[[b')]](b) opening the lactone ring;

[[c')]](c) optionally concentrating the solution to not more than half its initial volume;

[[d')]](d) adding water to the optionally concentrated solution;

[[e')]](e) adding a solvent which is slightly miscible or immiscible with water and in which the pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt is insoluble or practically insoluble, in an amount not less than the water volume added in step [[d')]](d);

[[f')]](f) optionally mixing the phases, and then separating the two phases;

[[g')]](g) neutralizing the aqueous phase;

[[h')]](h) converting atorvastatin in the aqueous phase to the pharmaceutically acceptable salt; and

[[i')]](i) precipitating the pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt in non-crystalline form.

Claim 19. (currently amended). A process for preparing a pharmaceutical formulation containing a pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt in non-crystalline form, which comprises:

[[(1)]](a) preparing a pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt in non-crystalline form by the process of claim 18; and

[[(2)]](b) mixing the **[[thus-]]**prepared pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt in non-crystalline form with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 20. (currently amended). The process of claim 19 wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable salt is **[[the]]** a calcium salt.

Claim 21. (currently amended) The process of claim 18 wherein the non-hydroxylic solvent is selected from the group consisting of tetrahydrofuran, 1,4-dioxane, acetone, ethyl acetate, a mixture of these solvents, and a mixture of one or more of these solvents with toluene, n-heptane, n-hexane, or acetonitrile in the volume ratio from 1:0.01 to 1:1.0.

Claim 22. (currently amended) The process of claim 21, wherein the non-hydroxylic solvent is tetrahydrofuran.

Claim 23. (currently amended) The process of claim 18 wherein the solvent, which is slightly miscible or immiscible with water, and in which the pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt is insoluble or practically insoluble, is selected from the group consisting of hexane, heptane, cyclohexane, ether, and diisopropyl ether.

Claim 24. (currently amended) The process of claim 23 wherein the solvent which is slightly miscible or immiscible with water, and in which the pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt is insoluble or practically insoluble, is hexane.

Claim 25. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein the atorvastatin lactone solution of step a) is formed during lactone synthesis.

Claim 26. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step b) comprises adding a base and maintaining the solution at from 40°C to 60°C.

Claim 27. (new) The process of claim 26 wherein the base is an alkali metal hydroxide or alkaline earth metal hydroxide, and the molar ratio of the base to the lactone is from 1:0.2 to 1:0.6.

Claim 28. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step c) comprises concentrating the solution to from 15% to 50% of its initial volume.

Claim 29. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step d) comprises adding water in 0.2-fold to 5-fold relative to the volume of the optionally concentrated solution.

Claim 30. (new) The process of claim 29 wherein step d) comprises adding water in 0.6-fold to 1.5-fold relative to the volume of the optionally concentrated solution.

Claim 31. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step e) comprises adding the solvent in 1-fold to 5-fold relative to the water volume previously added in step d).

Claim 32. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step g) comprises adding an acid to the aqueous phase to adjust its pH to from 6.5 to 8.

Claim 33. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step h) comprises heating the neutralized aqueous solution to from 30°C to 40°C, and then adding a 30°C to 40°C aqueous solution of a salt of the pharmaceutically acceptable cation.

Claim 34. (new) The process of claim 33 wherein, after the addition of the salt, the solution is mixed at a temperature of from 10°C to 30°C.

Claim 35. (new) The process of claim 18, wherein step i) comprises adjusting the temperature of the solution to from 2°C to 15°C to precipitate the pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt in non-crystalline form.

Claim 36. (new) The process of claim 18 wherein step i) comprises adding a water-miscible organic solvent in which the pharmaceutically acceptable atorvastatin salt is insoluble or practically insoluble.